

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

We have all been elected!

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Some dictators like to have elections, and then it is not uncommon to see results of 99.8% of the votes going to the dictator and his party. So, everybody elects him. Recently, we have experienced the opposite: we have all been elected as members of an Academy.

Last week, a joyful letter told me I had been elected a member of the Academy of Applied and Clinical Thrombosis/Hemostasis. In fact, the letter reached me twice, once referring to me with my first name, once with my initials. I envisioned the wizened members of an austere Academy twice putting forward my name, twice extolling my virtues, twice casting their votes, and twice electing me with overwhelming majorities, if not complete consensus.

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The good news had not ended here: I was also promised that as a member of this Academy, my manuscripts would receive priority publication in the journal of the Academy, aka the *Journal of Applied and Clinical Thrombosis/Hemostasis*. No more confidence-shattering rejections, no more painstaking revisions, no more depressed PhD fellows: we just send it all there and get the highest publication rate, although not impact factor.

Further credibility and trustworthiness was demonstrated through a list of members on the letter, including several individuals active in the field of hemostasis and thrombosis. Alas, as with all scams, reality appeared just a little less beautiful. First, I was asked for \$245—as a membership fee. Secondly, the way I received the same letter twice, addressed slightly differently, was highly suggestive of the merging of two bought databases without much attention to double entries. I sent an e-mail to 10 colleagues in various countries, in Europe and the USA, and asked them whether they had received the same letter. Almost all had. I am happy to report that they also invariably had discarded the letter. Nevertheless, it is quite amazing that a medical journal attempts to sell itself by these means, and openly admits to not treating all manuscripts in a fair and unbiased way, thereby disqualifying itself and the members of its 'Academy'.

Acute thrombocytopenia induced by Jui, a traditional herbal medicine

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In July 1999, a 54-year-old man with hepatic cirrhosis presented at our hospital for evaluation of epistaxis and purpura on his lower legs. He denied taking any drugs at that time. The white-cell count was $6.1 \times 10^9 \text{ L}^{-1}$, the platelet count was $0.0 \times 10^{10} \text{ L}^{-1}$, and the hemoglobin level was 13.0 g dL^{-1} . He responded to platelet transfusion and the platelet count